Appearing in other subjects in lieu of maths

2123. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether CBSE has embarked on a scheme to allow students to appear compartmentally in other substitute subjects if they fail in maths;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) to what extent this will affect the level of maths in the country;

(d) what thought had been given by CBSE before finalising this scheme; and

(e) the steps proposed by CBSE to consider all consequences before embarking on such schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) As per the proposal with Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Mathematics is proposed to be as a compulsory subject for all students upto Class X. However a candidate who fails in Mathematics in the main examination of Class X and again fails in the first compartment examination may be allowed to have the option of offering an alternative subject in lieu of Mathematics at the second chance or subsequent compartment examination.

(c) Since Mathematics is proposed to be retained as a compulsory subject upto Class X with undifferentiated syllabus and common examination pattern for all students, the Scheme is not expected to affect the level of Mathematics in the country.

(d) and (e) This Scheme was scrutinized by the Examination and Curriculum Committee of the Board and also the Governing Body from various angles. Various implications have been taken into account after detailed consultations. The proposal is expected to facilitate students not passing in Mathematics after repeated attempts, to continue to pursue further studies.

Visa for US scholars

2124. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that U.S. Scholars from certain prestigious universities applying to the Central Government to research on various

subjects of their choice in Indian universities/institutes under the Indo-US Fullbright Bilateral Scholarship Exchange programme are denied visa or do not get clearance from the concerned authorities for months on end or asked to change their topic of research, while the Indian scholars visiting the U.S. under the same programme get the necessary clearance from the U.S. authorities immediately; and

(b) if so, the details with measures proposed to be taken to correct the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Research proposals from foreign scholars are processed in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of External Affairs, in accordance with the prescribed guidelines/instructions of the Central Government of visa authorization. There is no discrimination against scholars from any country.

Reduction of school fees to compensate petro-price hike

2125. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that developing countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and Ghana have sweetened the politically bitter pill of petro-prices by reducing or waiving school fees for children;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to follow suit; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (c) The Constitution (86th Amendment) Act 2002 provides for free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years as a fundamental right under Article 21A of the Constitution. School fees for students in secondary and higher secondary classes (IX to XII) are generally quite low in Government and Government aided school, which constitute about 70% of the total number of such schools in the country.